Mr. Gladstone AND THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

Mr. Gladstone has revived an old assertion of his, in his Electoral address to Mid-Lothian, viz.: that the Plan of Campaign was the answer of Ireland to the refusal of the present Government to pass Mr. Parnell's Relief Bill in September, 1886.

That dates are against this assertion, may, we think, be proved by the following extracts :—

Mr. T. Healy said at Cork, in 1883, "He would never again be a party to recommending an estate to strike for a reduction of rents until every man on the estate had put down a year's rent, and banked it in the name of his parish priest, or some local leader of the National party."—*Freeman's Journal*, 13th June, 1883.

The same paper reports another speech by the same agitator, dated 4th October, 1885. "Now he (Healy) suggested on a former occasion that what should be done was, that when they were refused a reasonable abatement they should lodge their rent in a bank in the name of three or four trustees, including the priest, some trustworthy men of their organization, and two or three of themselves, and that the money should be used for the aid of those whom the landlord should try to evict. It was evident a mere parish organization of that kind would be broken up by the landlords in detail, and, in his (Healy's) judgment, if they wanted to win—if the landlords had again the campaign of evictions—what the National leaders would have to recommend was this, that the half-million tenant-farmers in Ireland should put up their rents into one common fund, and, instead of paying it to the landlords, pay it to the trustees. They would then have a sum of six or seven or ten millions of money as a campaign fund—a war chest—to fight the battle with, and he believed if the landlords saw that the people had even a single million of money to fight with, while they themselves had been delivered of their rents, they would speedily give in and kick the bucket."—*Freeman's Journal*, 5th October, 1885.

United Ireland of 24th October and of 19th December, 1885, contains leading articles advocating what was subsequently known as the Plan of Campaign. In the article of the 24th October, 1885, comment is made on the usual method adopted by the tenants in trying to force the landlords to grant reductions of rent; this method was that the tenants "left the rent office in a body" when their demands were refused. The article contends that this is a weak method, and

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recommends the banking of rents in trustees' hands, in short the creation of a war chest to succour every man who is attacked. The article of the 19th December, 1885, contains more information in these words :—"We observe that in many parts of the country, the farmers in desperation are banking their rents; and if the example is generally followed, and the fund is united in a common purse, we are certain the distress-mongers can be brought to their senses."

United Ireland moreover gives some account of how the "banking of the rents in trustees' hands" worked in the latter part of 1885, a year before Mr. Gladstone says the Plan was adopted as Irelands answer to the policy of the present Government; the occurrences may not all be true, but they are reported in *United Ireland* as if they were facts. The following are some of them taken from the paper mentioned:—

24th October, 1885. The tenants of Mr. Gorman Uniacke of Mount Uniacke, on Friday, October 16th, drove into Youghal and lodged their rents in the Provincial Bank, deducting 20 per cent in the name of their respected curate, the Rev. John Savage. The landlord says he cannot afford to give any abatement; but the tenants are prepared to fight if they don't get something.

24th October, 1885. The tenants on the Newtown estate of Archbishop Plunket, it was announced at the last meeting of the Shendrum National League Branch, have taken the sensible course of lodging their rent in bank in the name of trustees, pending his Grace's decision regarding a reasonable abatement. They have also resolved on forming a Defence Fund in view of the possible contingency of a hardening of the episcopal heart in their regard, and a considerable sum has already been subscribed.

24th October, 1885. On Saturday last the tenants on Lord Kenmare's Bantry estate visited Carrigana in a body. As the tenants would not pay unless they received 35 per cent. reduction, and as Mr. Leonard had no authority to make the abatement, they left without paying anything, and on Monday lodged the amount, less the reduction asked, in the Munster and Leinster bank, and set about raising a fund to resist any legal proceedings that Lord Kenmare may take.

7th November, 1885. At a meeting of the tenants of Sir P. O'Brien, M.P., at the Market House, Borris-in-Ossory, Rev. M. G. McGrath, C.C., chairman, said, that the tenants should come to an arrangement as to what fair reduction they would require, and if the landlord refused to grant that fair reduction when the men went forward in a body to pay their rent, they should

then lodge the reduced rents in the bank in the names of three or four trustees. A resolution was then passed calling on the landlords to make a reduction of 30 per cent., and not to call for arrears of rent until next November. It was proposed and seconded "that we select Father McGrath, Mr. Kelly, &c., (six persons) to act as trustees of our rents if we be put to the necessity of lodging them in bank." The resolution was unanimously passed.

7th November, 1885. Mr. O'Connell's agent, Mr. Carney, visited Rathmore on the 3rd inst., to collect rents due on the property, but he got none, as he would not give a reduction of 30 per cent.; the tenants, one hundred in number, left in a body, and are going to lodge their money in the bank, and sixpence in the £ for a Defence Fund.

7th November, 1885. It was decided by the tenantry of the united parishes of Murroe and Boher, who met to consider what reductions they required, to meet together, confer with Canon Wall, and if the money is refused, hand it to Canon Wall until such time as there is a general settlement made.

7th November, 1885. Final meeting of tenants on the property of Major Doyle to make arrangements in demanding a reduction in their rents. Unanimous in demanding 25 per cent. If refused, they will bank the rents at the reduction in the name of trustees, and raise a Defence Fund at one shilling in the £ to protect any tenants that may be put out.

14th November, 1885. Lord Doneraile having refused the demands of his tenants, the latter subsequently met and came to a resolution of banking their rents less 30 per cent., the reduction sought, and have determined to pay no rent without the reduction required. About £2,000 have already been lodged.

14th November, 1885. The tenants on the Cuddagh and Clonin (Mountrath) property of the late D. M. Kirk, accompanied by Revs. Fathers Coady, P.P., and Fitzpatrick, C.C., waited on the respected agent, Mr. H. Franks, and offered him the rents now payable, less 25 per cent. This the agent declined to accept, as the trustees of the property had only empowered him to grant a reduction of 15 per cent. This offer they declined, and as they considered their demand not only just but extremely moderate, they withdrew in a body and handed over their rents, less 25 per cent., to five trustees who have lodged them in bank.

5th December, 1885. The tenants of the townlands of Clonbrowne, Clonrooske and Ballygarrett, attended at the office of Mr. J. H. Tyrrell, Edenderry, and demanded a reduction in their rents, which Mr. Tyrrell refused to grant. The tenants then left in

a body and called on Mr. John P. H. Patterson, who accompanied them to the Hibernian Bank, and there lodged the amount of their rents that they considered themselves able to pay in the names of trustees.

5th December, 1885. The tenantry on the Cullohill property of Lord Carberry a few weeks since forwarded a memorial to the agents, Messrs. Stewart & Son, Dublin, asking a reduction of 35 per cent. on the year's rent now due. Mr. Stewart attended at Durrow on the 20th inst. (Nov. ?), to receive the rents. The tenants attended, accompanied by Rev. P. Phelan, C.C., Cullohill, but he offered them only 15 per cent. on the half-year's rent. This offer they unanimously refused, but went away and lodged the year's rent, less 35 per cent., in the Hibernian Bank, in the names of the Parish Priest, the two curates and three farmers of the property. The attention of the Hon. William Freke, the trustee of the property, has been called to the matter. A favourable reply is expected.

5th December, 1885. The tenants on the Kildare, Irish-town, and Loughnavally estates of Miss Magan met the agent; their demands being refused, they left the office in a body, and, to a man, lodged their rents, less the reduction demanded, telling the agent that the money was at his disposal the moment that Miss Magan would favourably receive their demand.

19th December, 1885. The tenants on the estates of Miss Collis, Major Collis and Mr. Mathias Hendley attended at the rooms of the National League, Kilworth. They some time since decided to pay their rents at an abatement of 20 per cent. Their demands not having been acceded to by the respective landlords they now met and handed over the rents minus the required abatement to Rev. P. J. Horgan, P.P., President, and Rev. J. D. Greene, C.C., Vice-President of the Kilworth and Araglen Branch in whose names the money is for the present to be deposited in the bank.

It appears therefore from the above, (1) that the Plan of Campaign, though not called by that name, was fomented by the Nationalists before 1886. (2) That, according to the authority of *United Ireland*, it was put in force in 1885, and (3) that it differed from the conspiracy in 1886, in this only, viz., that in 1885 the "trustees" were not necessarily unknown persons, whereas in 1886 their names were to be kept secret.